

# ***FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET***

**Meeting Date:** August 8, 2013

**Agenda Item:** Final Furbearer Quotas, Setbacks and Proposed Expansion of Special Regulations

**Division:** Wildlife

**Action Needed:** Approval of Final Rule

**Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation:** 15 minutes

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## **Background**

The FWP Commission adopted the following proposed changes to 2013 furbearer harvest quotas and trap setbacks on June 5:

Increase the bobcat quota in Trapping District 1 from 250 to 275

Reduce the bobcat quota in Trapping District 4 from 300 to 200

Increase the swift fox quota in a portion of Trapping District 6 from 20 to 30

Decrease the statewide wolverine quota from 5 to 0.

Require a 300-foot setback for ground sets on public land on specific high recreational use trails.

In addition, FWP is proposing an area expansion of the special regulations currently in place for bobcat, marten, fisher and wolverine in portions of Trapping Districts 1 and 2 that are intended to avoid incidental lynx captures. The expansion would include the two federally designated critical lynx habitat areas in the state and additional occupied and potentially occupied lynx habitat on public lands in Trapping Districts 1, 2 and portions of 3, 4 and 5.

## **Public Involvement Process & Results**

The public comment period for quota changes and trap setbacks ended on July 22. FWP received approximately 200 comments regarding quotas and 780 comments on the setback proposal and these have been delivered to the Commission for consideration. The expansion of special regulations was not part of this public comment period.

## **Alternatives and Analysis**

Quota adjustments are in response to FWP reviews and analysis of species information. The trap setback is intended to address interest by user groups for FWP to identify specific high public recreational use areas to reduce conflicts between trappers and recreationists with dogs. FWP proposes to further avoid incidental lynx captures in a larger area of the state to include both federally designated critical lynx habitat areas and additional occupied and potentially occupied public land lynx habitat.

## **Agency Recommendation & Rationale**

FWP recommends adopting the 2013 quotas to bobcat, swift fox and wolverine, which are consistent with analysis of existing population and harvest trend information for furbearer management. With the uncertainty in the status of wolverine harvest, a reduced quota to zero is appropriate but FWP may seek to adjustments at the October 2013 F&W Commission meeting. The trap setback requirement for ground sets along specific high recreational use trails represents a reasonable and appropriate consideration to minimize potential public user group conflicts. Expansion of special regulations on public lands would demonstrate the commitment FWP has to minimize incidental captures of a federally protected wildlife species while maintaining recreational furbearer trapping opportunities.

## **Proposed Motion**

I move to adopt the 2013 furbearer quotas, trail setbacks, and expansion of special regulations for bobcat, marten, fisher, and wolverine as proposed by FWP.